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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [KDEM](#) [EG](#)
SUBJECT: AYMAN NOUR'S WIFE ON LATEST TRAVAILS

REF: A. 2008 CAIRO 2350
[1](#)B. 2008 CAIRO 2420

Classified By: DCM Matthew H. Tueller, for reason 1.4 (d).

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: In a January 11 meeting, Gameela Ismail, wife of imprisoned Ghad party leader Ayman Nour, told us that Nour has been baselessly accused of assaulting a prison guard, and now faces solitary confinement as punishment. She said that Nour is "terrified" of solitary confinement, as the conditions are abysmal, and he fears a government-orchestrated "accident." Ismail noted that a few days ago, a prisoner in the same facility as Nour was put in solitary confinement, and allegedly "committed suicide," although Nour is convinced he was killed while closeted away from the eyes of other prisoners. Nour is also concerned that the new charges will prevent him from being released in summer 2009, after he has served three-quarters of his term. (Note: Egyptian law allows for prisoners who have demonstrated good behavior to be released after serving three-quarters of their term. Nour's lawyers do not anticipate that the GOE will apply this non-mandatory practice to Nour. End note). Nour has filed a legal complaint contesting the assault charges, which will be heard on January 20 by the Cairo Administrative Court. Ismail is also concerned about three pending court cases against her, and overall increased harassment. End summary.

[1](#)2. (C) Ismail said that overall prison conditions for Nour have deteriorated. The guards on his cell block were recently transferred, due to allegations that they were developing too close a relationship with Nour. The new guards are reportedly "tougher." For instance, when Gameela last visited Nour a week ago, the guards insisted on doing a body search of her before the meeting, in front of her husband. Rather than watching the guards grope his wife, Nour allegedly asked Ismail to leave, and to not visit him again "for some time."

[1](#)3. (C) According to Ismail, there are three court cases currently pending against her - two related to the recent burning of the Ghad Party headquarters (refs A and B), and one on charges of "insulting a civil servant" during a 2007 demonstration outside Torah Prison, where Nour is held. Ismail said every few days, she is called to the Public Prosecutor's office for another interrogation regarding one of the cases. She believes that the threat of her being imprisoned as a result of one of the court cases will be used as a "pressure card" against Nour: "If he is finally released, the government will dangle my possible imprisonment in front of him, to keep him from being 'troublesome'." One of Nour's new prison guards reportedly told him that Ismail would be imprisoned "as soon as you go free." Ismail noted that harassment against her and Nour's two teenage sons has "dramatically" increased over the past few months, and showed us anonymous text messages sent to her, rife with sexual innuendo and implied threats against her children. She asked that the Ambassador raise the harassment and court cases against her with Minister of Interior Habib El Adly: "Please ask him to back off from this aggression towards me."

(Note: We will raise concerns about the treatment of Ismail with the GOE. End note).

¶4. (C) Ismail was hopeful that Nour will be released soon, noting that some Al Ghad members believe the GOE will pardon him once the Obama administration is in place. She said that Nour has been dismayed by recent USG statements, from the Ambassador and Washington, which have not mentioned Nour. According to Ismail, Nour's preference is that his case be raised publicly "at every available opportunity," as he feels that having his name mentioned causes the prison guards to treat him "more carefully, as they know then that someone is carefully watching." Ismail noted that she understands that the USG is "playing quiet" for now, in order to "give the government the space to release Nour." She noted that she agreed with that approach, and asked that we keep her apprised of any developments regarding Nour's possible release, which we pledged to do.

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